

CLAIMS:

1. A compound preparation method characterised by the steps of:
 - (i) cooling the compound to increase its rigidity, and
 - (ii) mechanically processing the compound to render the compound into a plurality of particles or components of substantially the same size.
2. A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 1, further characterised by the additional subsequent step of
 - (iii) subjecting the rendered compound to an analysis and/or reaction process.
3. A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the compound is prepared prior to an analysis process used to investigate the compounds constituent components.
4. A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 3 wherein the compound is analysed using a near infra-red spectrophotometer.
5. A compound preparation method as claimed in any previous claim wherein the compound is cooled using a cooling agent.
6. A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the compound is immersed in the cooling agent to cool the compound and increase the compounds rigidity.
7. A compound preparation method as claimed in any previous claim wherein the compound is cooled using liquid carbon dioxide.

8. A compound preparation method as claimed in any previous claim wherein mechanical processing of the compound homogenises the compound.
9. A compound preparation method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the mechanical processing of the compound renders the compound into a plurality of distinct particles of substantially the same size.
10. A compound preparation method as claimed in any previous claim wherein the compound is mechanically processed using at least one rotating blade.
11. A compound preparation method as claimed in any previous claim wherein the compound is an organic compound.
12. A compound preparation method as claimed in claim 11 where the compound is formed from or includes plant tissue.
13. A compound preparation apparatus which includes a cooling means adapted to cool the compound to increase the compounds rigidity, and a mechanical processing means adapted to mechanically process the compound to render the compound into a plurality of components of substantially the same size.
14. A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 13 wherein the cooling means is adapted to supply a cooling agent to cool the compound and increase the compound's rigidity.
15. A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein the cooling means includes a source of liquefied carbon dioxide.
16. A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 15 wherein the mechanical processing means includes at least one blade adapted to rotate to mechanically process a compound.

17. A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 16 which includes a flushing means adapted to flush gas from within the mechanical processing means.
18. A compound preparation apparatus as claimed in claim 17 wherein the flushing means includes at least one fan and/or heating element combination.
19. A method of preparing a compound substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated by the accompanying drawings and/or examples.
20. A compound preparation apparatus substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated by the accompanying drawings and/or examples.